

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5 1. An apparatus for generating a nanoscale oscillating electric field, comprising:

 a resonant medium having at least one surface plasmon mode therein; and
 an active medium, having a transition frequency and having at least one object
 having a significant dipole oscillator strength;

10 wherein the application of an energy source to the active medium results in
 the transition of the at least one object, thereby stimulating the emission of the at least
 one surface plasmon in the resonant medium.

15 2. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the resonant medium is affixed to a
 substrate.

3. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the resonant medium is a
 nanowedge.

20 4. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the resonant medium is a metal
 nanoparticle.

5. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the resonant medium is a composite
 nanoparticle.

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6. The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the composite nanoparticle
 comprises a metal.

7. The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the composite nanoparticle comprises a semiconductor.

8. The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the composite nanoparticle
5 comprises a dielectric.

9. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the resonant medium has surface plasmon modes in the visible region of the electromagnetic frequency spectrum.

10 10. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the resonant medium has a plurality of surface plasmon modes in an ultraviolet region of the electromagnetic frequency spectrum.

11. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the resonant medium has surface
15 plasmon modes in the infrared region of the electromagnetic frequency spectrum.

12. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the resonant medium is approximately 30 nanometers long.

20 13. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the resonant medium is approximately 20 nanometers wide.

14. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the object of the active medium is a rare-earth ion.

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15. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the object of the active medium is a dye molecule.

16. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the object of the active medium is a semiconductor quantum dot.

17. The apparatus of Claim 15 wherein the quantum dot is a doped
5 semiconductor.

18. The apparatus of Claim 15 wherein the quantum dot is a nanocrystal,
including a nanocrystal covered with a layer of organic molecules.

10 19. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the transition frequency of the
active medium is substantially within an electromagnetic frequency range that
includes visible light.

15 20. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the transition frequency of the
active medium is substantially within an electromagnetic frequency range that
includes ultraviolet light.

20 21. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the transition frequency of the
active medium is substantially within an electromagnetic frequency range that
includes infrared light.

22. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the energy source is an optical
energy source.

25 23. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the energy source is an electrical
energy source.

24. The apparatus of Claim 20, wherein the electrical energy source is
coupled to the active medium by nanoleads or a nanoleads.

25. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the energy source is a chemical energy source.

5 26. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the energy source is a nuclear energy source.

27. A method for fabricating a SPASER device, the method comprising the steps of:

affixing a resonant medium to a substrate; and

affixing an active medium to the resonant medium;

5 wherein the application of an energy source to the active medium results in the transition of the at least one object, thereby stimulating the emission of the at least one surface plasmon in the resonant medium.

28. A method for generating surface plasmon emission, the method comprising the steps of:
- applying energy to an active medium, causing a transition of at least one object within the active medium;
 - 5 transferring energy from the active medium to at least one surface plasmon on a resonant medium; and
 - stimulating the emission of surface plasmons in the resonant medium.